

# Army Futures Command

April 24, 2018 (IN10889)

---

## Related Author

---

- [Andrew Feickert](#)

---

Andrew Feickert, Specialist in Military Ground Forces ([afeickert@crs.loc.gov](mailto:afeickert@crs.loc.gov), 7-7673)

---

## The Issue

The Army's post-Cold War development of major combat systems has been characterized by a number of high-profile program cancellations, such as Crusader, an artillery system cancelled in 2002 after having spent \$2.2 billion; Comanche, a helicopter program cancelled in 2004 after having spent \$7.9 billion; and the Future Combat System (FCS), cancelled in 2009 after having spent \$18.1 billion. In addition to the expenditure of resources, these cancellations have impeded the development of newer, more capable systems, permitting potential adversaries to achieve battlefield parity and, in some cases, superiority over U.S. ground combat systems. [The Army describes the issue](#) as follows:

The Army's current requirements and capabilities development practices take too long. On average, the Army takes from 3 to 5 years to approve requirements and another 10 years to design, build, and test new weapon systems. The Army is losing near-peer competitive advantage in many areas: we are outranged, outgunned, and increasingly outdated. Private industry and some potential adversaries are fielding new capabilities much faster than we are. The speed of change in war fighting concepts, threats, and technology is outpacing current Army modernization constructs and processes.

## The Proposed Solution: Army Futures Command

In November 2017, the Army established a Modernization Task Force to examine the options for establishing an [Army Futures Command](#) intended to establish unity of command and effort that consolidates the Army's modernization process under one roof. Currently, Army

modernization activities are primarily spread among Forces Command (FORSCOM), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Army Materiel Command (AMC), Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC), and the Army Deputy Chief of Staff G-8. Intended to be a 4-star headquarters [consisting of 500 or fewer military and civilian personnel](#) largely drawn from existing Army commands, Army Futures Command is planned to be established in an urban environment with ready access to academic, technological, and industrial expertise. A decision on its location is expected in the summer of 2018. Reportedly, [most Army Futures Command personnel are to remain with their current commands and only the headquarters group will relocate](#). The Army intends Army Futures Command to achieve an initial operational capability in the summer of 2018 and full operational capability about a year later.

### Army Futures Command Modernization Priorities

Army Futures Command Cross Functional Teams are intended to manage the [Army's six current modernization priorities](#):

- **Long Range Precision Fires:** Modernize cannon artillery for extended range and volume and increased missile capabilities to restore Army dominance in range.
- **Next Generation of Combat Vehicles:** Develop prototypes leading to replacement of the current fleet of infantry fighting vehicles, and later tanks, in manned, unmanned, and optionally manned variants.
- **Future Vertical Lift:** Incorporate manned, unmanned, and optionally manned variant vertical lift platforms to provide superior speed, range, endurance, altitude, and payload capabilities.
- **Network:** Develop expeditionary infrastructure solutions to fight reliably on the move in any environment.
- **Air and Missile Defense:** Ensure future combat formations are protected from modern and advanced air and missile delivered fires, including drones.
- **Soldier Lethality:** Develop the next generation of individual and squad weapons; improve body armor, sensors, and radios; and develop a synthetic training environment.

### Potential Issues for Congress

- How will existing Army Commands be re-aligned to support the creation of Army Futures Command? If the missions of existing commands are significantly changed as a result of re-alignment, is there potential to further consolidate existing Army Commands to create greater efficiencies, and could this result in a workforce reduction?
- How will the creation of Army Futures Command change the Army's modernization process? Will Army Futures Command merely superimpose another layer of bureaucracy on a slightly modified process, or will it result in a completely new way of doing business?
- Will new or modified Department of Defense and/or legislative authorities be required to support Army Futures Command?
- How will Army Futures Command operate within the overall context of the Department of Defense acquisition process?
- What metrics will the Army employ to demonstrate to Congress that Army Futures Command has made a demonstrable improvement in the Army's modernization process?
- How will Army Futures Command manage dedicated contractors to ensure that it does

not become "overgrown" with contractor support?

- While it is relatively easy to establish a new organization and related processes, it is much more difficult to change the culture of the organization. What are some of the anticipated organizational cultural change challenges, and how does Army leadership plan to address these challenges?